In the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph starting on page 6, line 31, with the following amended paragraph:

Compounds which block the apoptotic effect of pressure neuronal cells, and in turn which may block stretch-activated channels (see Hamill O, McBride DW, *Pharmacol Rev* 1996; **48**: 231-252) include: ~~gandolinium~~ gadolinium (Gd^{3+}); a lanthanide; pyrazine-carboxamides such as amiloride and its analogues (as described by Kleyman and Cragoe (1998) *J Membr Biol* 105:1-21 and Kleyman and Cragoe (1990) *Methods Enzymol* 191:739-754); aminoglycoside antibiotics (such as verdamycin, gentamicin, sisomycin, streptomycin, dihydrostreptomycin, netilmycin, amikacin, ribostamycin, dibekacin, kanamycin; other blockers including: Na channel blockers, Ca channel blockers, K channel blockers; Ca ions, protons; aluminum ions; tubocurarine; halothane and other inhalational anaesthetics; quinine, positively charged medium to long-chained fatty acids and fatty acid analogues (such as arachodonic acid, linoleic acid, γ-linoleic acid, docsahexanoic acid, oleic acid, tetradecanesulphonate, and myristic acid); integrin-blocking peptides and antibodies, cisplatin; tarantula spider venom; colchicine and vinblastine. At least one active compound is used in the compositions and methods of this invention. For example, two or more compounds may be used in combination. Such combinations may involve synergistic interactions. The effects may occur directly on the stretch-activated channels (SAC) or indirectly via actions on the cytoskelton, extracellular matrix or on mechanosensitive enzymes (phospholipase A2 and phospholipase C). Inhibitors of these mechanisms are also with the scope of this invention.